



## Food, Nutrition & Safer Eating Policy

|              |               |                     |           |                |        |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------|----------------|--------|
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# Contents

|                                                 |   |
|-------------------------------------------------|---|
| Purpose and Scope .....                         | 3 |
| Aims .....                                      | 3 |
| Legal and Guidance Framework .....              | 3 |
| Responsibilities .....                          | 3 |
| Individual Dietary and Feeding Needs .....      | 4 |
| Safer Eating and Choking Prevention .....       | 4 |
| Food and Drink Provision .....                  | 5 |
| Food Hygiene, Storage and Preparation .....     | 6 |
| Allergies and Special Diets .....               | 6 |
| Recording and Reporting .....                   | 6 |
| Appendix A: Mealtime and Snack-time Check ..... | 7 |
| Appendix B: Minimum Choking-record Fields ..... | 8 |

# Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out safe, positive and inclusive eating arrangements from the two-year-old provision to Year 6, including snacks, school meals, packed lunches, wraparound provision, celebrations, clubs, visits and food-related curriculum activity.

It applies to food and drink provided by the school, supplied by the catering provider or brought from home. Allergy prevention and emergency response are governed by the separate Allergy Safety Policy and individual IHPs/action plans.

## EYFS statutory status

The whole-school standards apply to EYFS. Requirements specifically labelled “EYFS” are mandatory and take precedence where they exceed general school practice.

# Aims

This policy and associated documentation aims to:

- prevent choking, foodborne illness and avoidable food-related harm;
- provide calm, appropriately supervised eating environments;
- support healthy, balanced and culturally inclusive choices;
- clarify responsibilities for school food, catering and food from home;
- meet medical, religious, cultural, SEND, feeding and developmental needs;
- learn from incidents, monitoring and feedback.

# Legal and Guidance Framework

- EYFS statutory framework, paragraphs 3.62–3.72;
- DfE EYFS nutrition guidance (2025);
- School Food Standards and DfE resources;
- Food Safety Act 1990, food-hygiene law and Food Information Regulations 2014;
- Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice;
- DfE and Food Standards Agency advice on food safety and choking.

# Responsibilities

| Role                            | Responsibilities                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Governing Body / Trust          | Approve and review; assure legal compliance, resources, monitoring and contractor arrangements.                                 |
| Headteacher                     | Overall implementation; ensure linked policies, risk management, training and statutory reporting.                              |
| EYFS Lead                       | Implement EYFS safer-eating requirements; confirm paediatric-first-aid coverage; monitor choking records and practice.          |
| Catering Manager                | Assure catering contract, School Food Standards, food safety, allergen information and special-diet processes.                  |
| Staff and lunchtime supervisors | Check assigned food requirements; supervise effectively; prevent sharing; address visible risks; respond, record and report.    |
| Parents and carers              | Provide accurate dietary/feeding information; prepare safe, suitable and named packed food; supply agreed plans and containers. |

|                          |                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Catering provider</b> | Meet food law and contract standards; plan menus; manage hygiene, allergens, cross-contact, substitutions and special diets. |
| <b>Pupils</b>            | Follow routines; remain seated as directed; do not share; tell an adult if concerned or unwell.                              |

## Individual Dietary and Feeding Needs

Before admission, the school obtains information about allergies, intolerances, coeliac disease, cultural or religious diets, preferences, swallowing or feeding needs and relevant health conditions. Information is reviewed at least annually, at transition and on notification of change.

Medical allergies are managed under the Allergy Safety Policy and relevant IHP/action plan. Dietary preferences and non-allergic needs are communicated to staff and the catering provider on a need-to-know basis.

Pupils with dysphagia, oral-motor difficulty, restricted intake, sensory sensitivity or assisted-feeding needs have an individual plan informed by parents and appropriate professionals. Staff do not alter prescribed texture levels, feeding techniques or equipment without authorised advice. Reasonable adjustments may include one-to-one support, adapted utensils, seating, reduced noise, extra time and predictable routines.

## Safer Eating and Choking Prevention

### Whole-school standards

- Pupils eat seated in a suitable place and are supervised according to age, development, individual need and assessed risk.
- Staff position themselves and remain attentive so that choking or distress can be noticed promptly; choking may be silent.
- Food sharing is prevented. Pupils are encouraged but never forced to eat.
- School-served food is presented in a form appropriate to developmental need; an individual feeding plan overrides general arrangements.
- Staff intervene where an immediate choking, spoilage or other food-safety risk is observed in food from home and follow up with parents where needed.

### Additional EYFS Arrangements

- A member of staff with a valid full-course paediatric first aid certificate is in the room whenever EYFS children eat.
- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff. Where possible, supervising adults sit facing children; deployment does not rely on circulating alone.
- Children sit safely in an appropriately sized chair or highchair; a designated eating space is used where possible and distractions are minimised.
- At each meal or snack a named member of staff checks that each child receives food consistent with dietary, allergy, feeding and developmental requirements.
- For children introducing solid foods, staff discuss familiar textures and stage with parents and do not make assumptions from age.
- Food provided or served by the setting is prepared to prevent choking; immediately visible hazards in food from home are addressed.

## Safer Preparation for Children Under Five

| Food / Hazard                                       | Required Preparation or Restriction                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Small round fruit/vegetables                        | Remove stones and pips; cut lengthways and into quarters, e.g. grapes and cherry tomatoes.                  |
| Hard fruit/vegetables                               | Slice into thin pieces or batons; soften and remove skin where appropriate.                                 |
| Sausages/cylindrical foods                          | Cut lengthways into thin strips, not rounds; remove sausage skins.                                          |
| Meat/fish                                           | Remove bones.                                                                                               |
| Cheese/bread                                        | Cut cheese into strips; cut bread into strips for very young children; consider toasted or wholemeal bread. |
| Whole nuts and seeds                                | Must not be given to children under five.                                                                   |
| Popcorn, hard sweets, marshmallows, raw jelly cubes | Must not be given to children under five, including in play where ingestion is possible.                    |

## Food and Drink Provision

### Sources and Accountability

| Provision                               | Responsibility                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| School snacks/drinks                    | School selects, stores, prepares or serves safely; checks requirements; follows nutrition guidance.                                                                                |
| School meals                            | Catering provider plans and prepares under food-law and contract duties; school communicates needs and supervises; both follow agreed special-diet arrangements.                   |
| Packed food from home                   | Parents choose and prepare; school communicates expectations, uses available storage, supervises and addresses observed risks. Routine inspection of every item is not guaranteed. |
| Activities, clubs, visits, celebrations | Organiser completes advance food, ingredient, allergen, hygiene and choking checks and makes inclusive adjustments.                                                                |

### School Food and Nutrition

School meals meet applicable School Food Standards. Food and drink provided to EYFS children by the school is healthy, balanced and nutritious, with regard to DfE EYFS nutrition guidance. Fresh drinking water is accessible throughout the day.

School snacks provide variety and promote healthy eating. Nursery normally offers fresh fruit and/or vegetables with plain milk or water. Reception may offer toast with plain milk or water. Changes remain subject to dietary, choking, nutrition and allergy checks.

Fruit juice, squash, smoothies, sugary drinks and flavoured milk are not routinely provided. The school promotes fruit and vegetables, appropriate starchy foods, dairy or fortified alternatives and varied protein, while limiting food high in salt, free sugars and saturated fat.

### Packed Lunches

Parents are encouraged to provide a balanced lunch suitable for age, development and individual needs. Bags and containers should be named. Perishable items should be kept cool using an insulated container and ice pack where required. The school does not routinely refrigerate or reheat food from home unless an individual arrangement is agreed.

Staff do not routinely inspect every item before lunch, but address observed choking, contamination, spoilage or individual-plan concerns. Repeated concerns are discussed privately. Food is not removed solely because it differs from preferred healthy-lunch guidance unless it presents a safety risk or conflicts with an agreed plan.

### Celebrations and Sharing

Non-food celebrations are encouraged. Food for sharing requires prior agreement and must be in original sealed packaging with a complete ingredient and allergen label. Staff check it against known requirements and provide inclusive alternatives. Homemade food is not distributed for general sharing unless specifically authorised through a documented risk assessment.

## Food Hygiene, Storage and Preparation

- Those preparing or handling school food are competent and receive role-appropriate food-hygiene training.
- Handwashing, cleaning, temperature control, storage, separation and date-labelling follow the school/caterer food-safety management system.
- Equipment is clean, intact, age-appropriate and separated where required to control allergens.
- Pupils wash hands before eating and after using the toilet; eating surfaces are cleaned before and after use.
- Cooking and tasting activities include ingredient, allergen, hygiene, equipment and risk checks.

## Allergies and Special Diets

The Allergy Safety Policy governs identification, exposure control, IHPs, training, emergency medication, anaphylaxis, asthma, trips and incident learning. Staff supervising food have access to current information. The catering provider must retain allergen information and must not serve an unchecked last-minute substitution to a pupil with a special diet.

Food sharing and swapping are not permitted. The school does not claim to be allergen-free. Parents must provide accurate information and prescribed medication; staff follow the individual plan and agreed special-diet process.

## Recording and Reporting

### Choking

Any choking incident requiring intervention, including back blows, is recorded on the same day. The record identifies the pupil; date/time/location; food, source and preparation; events and signs; intervention and first aid; outcome; witnesses; parental notification and follow-up. Parents are informed the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Choking records are reviewed at least half-termly to identify patterns and action. Any allergic reaction or near miss is additionally managed under the Allergy Safety Policy.

### Food Poisoning and Other Reporting

#### EYFS food poisoning notification

If food poisoning affects two or more EYFS children cared for on the premises, the Headteacher will notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days, alongside other required notifications.

The Headteacher considers RIDDOR, environmental health, local authority/trust, Food Standards Agency, safeguarding and other reporting duties according to the circumstances.

## Appendix A: Mealtime and Snack-time Check

1. Check current dietary, feeding and allergy information and identify the named checker.
2. Match food to the correct pupil; resolve uncertainty before serving.
3. Confirm relevant emergency medication is accessible.
4. Check seating, supervision and environment; in EYFS confirm the full-course paediatric first aider is in the room.
5. Check visible choking hazards and developmental suitability.
6. Prevent sharing of food, drink, utensils and containers.
7. Remain attentive throughout eating.
8. Record and escalate incidents and inform parents as required.

## Appendix B: Minimum Choking-record Fields

| Field          | Required Detail                                                                                    |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Event          | Date/time; location; meal/activity; supervising staff and witnesses.                               |
| Pupil and food | Pupil; food/product; size, shape, texture and preparation; source; packaging retained if relevant. |
| What happened  | Observed signs; whether silent; sequence of events.                                                |
| Response       | First aid; who acted and when; 999/clinical advice; outcome and onward care.                       |
| Communication  | Parent, senior leader and catering/provider notification.                                          |
| Follow-up      | Immediate control; review; changes; owner and completion date.                                     |